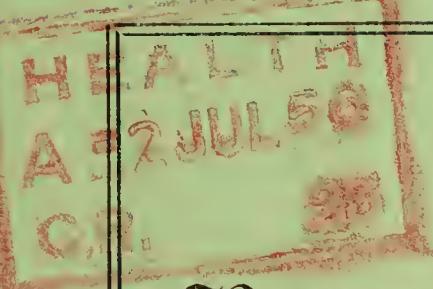


Library



Borough of South Molton



Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1955.

Borough of South Molton

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1955.

A faint, light-colored watermark or background image of a classical building with multiple columns and architectural details is visible across the entire page.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30114342>

113, East Street,

South Molton,

May, 1956.

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and
Councillors of the Borough of South Molton.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Health and Sanitation Administration of the Borough for the year 1955.

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health.

South Molton Borough

LIST OF STAFF

The Staff of the Public Health Department
consists of :-

Part-time Officers :—

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health.

A. J. C. NEX, M.S.I.A.,

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Mrs. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

Whole-time Officer :—

H. SETTLE, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (in acres)	5.910
Population (Registrar-General's Mid-Year Estimate)	3,090
Inhabited Houses	1,004
Rateable Value	£18,737
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£71

VITAL STATISTICS

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	24	20	44
Illegitimate	1	0	1
			45

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 population 14.5

	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	—	—	—
			2

STILL BIRTH RATE per 1,000 total (live and still) births 42.5

	Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	24	21	45

DEATH RATE per 1,000 population 14.5

The Table below shows the comparative figures for the South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The Local Birth and Death Rates are shown corrected by the Area Comparability Factors.

	Birth Rate per 1,000 population		Death Rate per 1,000 population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton Borough	15.9	0.64	11.4	22.2	0
England and Wales	15.0	—	11.7	24.9	—

DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	1
Illegitimate	...	—	—
DEATH RATE per 1,000 Live Births	22.2	—	1

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 4 WEEKS

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	—	1
Illegitimate	...	—	—
			1

LOCAL DEATHS OVER 65 YEARS

65—69 ... 8	85—89 ... 4
70—74 ... 6	90—94 ... 0
75—79 ... 5	95 plus ... 0
80—84 ... 8	Total ... 31

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	0

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1955

		Males	Females
Malignant Neoplasm of Bronchus	...	1	0
Malignant Neoplasm of Stomach	...	0	1
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	1	3	
Diabetes	...	2	0
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	2	2
Coronary Disease	...	2	0
Other Heart Diseases	...	7	8
Other Circulatory Disease	...	2	1
Pneumonia	...	1	0
Bronchitis	...	3	0
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	0	1
Congenital Malformation	...	1	0
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	...	2	5
		—	—
		24	21

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED IN 1955

(in age groups excluding Tuberculosis)

Age years	Males	Females	Age years
0—1			10—15
1—2			15—20
2—3	2	1	20—25
3—4			25—30
4—5			30—40
5—10		2	
	—	—	
Total	2	3	

NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS DURING THE YEAR 1955

1 Male, age 25 ... Pulmonary

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA HOSPITALS

1. Tuberculosis

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds.

2. Maternity Cases

There is a ward of 14 beds with a fully qualified staff at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for maternity cases of doubt and difficulty.

Beds are also set aside for maternity cases in the South Molton and District Cottage Hospital.

The General Practitioners' Maternity Unit of 13 beds is at "Highfield," Victoria Road, Barnstaple.

3. Isolation of Infectious Diseases

Cases are sent either to Whipton Hospital, near Exeter, or to the Kingsley Hospital (formerly North Devon Isolation Hospital), which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. The latter is of recent construction and well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases.

There are 20 beds available in cubicles for Infectious Cases.

4. Small Pox

The Small Pox Hospital, to which cases of Small Pox will be sent, is at Upton Pine. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter 67158, and this is the same number for the ambulance.

5. General

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough of South Molton, serves this area. There are 9 beds for general and maternity cases. The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple, also serves the area and provides Specialists' Services.

In South Molton there are also chronic sick patients at Beech House, but no further admissions are being made.

6. Clinics and Treatment Centres

CHEST CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple. Below is a table giving days and times of attendance.

Tuesday	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	} Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
Thursday	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	
Friday	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	} A.P. Refills

V.D. CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, in the Annexe. Times and days are as below for the sessions.

FEMALES—Monday	4 p.m.	Thursday 4.30 p.m.
MALES—Monday	5.15 p.m.	Thursday 5.45 p.m.

7. Professional Nursing in the Homes

There is one District Nurse in the area who also acts as a Midwife.

8. Laboratory Facilities

The main Laboratory is situated at 7 Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of water and milk are also carried out. The service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the medical practitioners.

There is also a Pathological Laboratory at the former Barnstaple and North Devon Dispensary Building in Barnstaple with a full-time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon area.

There is a Blood Bank at this Laboratory.

9. Immunization Against Diphtheria

During the year 30 children received Primary Injections and 82 received Reinforcing Injections.

10. Vaccination

The following table shows the number of Vaccinations carried out in their age groups during the year:—

Under 1 year—8. 1-4 years—9. 5-14 years—1.
15 years and over—8.

11. Ambulance Services

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e. the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme an ambulance station has been established at South Molton. The districts served are South Molton Borough and South Molton Rural District. The Hospital Car Service, also under the Devon County Council, is available on application to the Hospital, and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when an ambulance is not necessary.

12. Acute Poliomyelitis

No cases occurred during the year.

13. Food Poisoning

No cases occurred during the year.

14. Home Help Service

There are Home Helps operating in the South Molton Borough and Rural Districts and the scheme is run by the Devon County Council. During the year help was rendered in 26 cases as follows:—

Maternity 11, Old Age 7, Old Age (long term) 4,
Others (sickness, etc.) 4.

Any case recommended by a Doctor, Health Visitor or District Nurse is entitled to a Home Help. The Home Helps do any work in the house normally done by the housewife.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk and the Sanitary Inspector for the help they have given me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor and from the Holywell Spring and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,000,000 gallons. A new spillway is under construction and when completed a further 500,000 gallons of water will be impounded.

It is piped therefrom to the Filter House at Westland Bridge and is passed through three Candy Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6in. diameter to the Service Reservoirs in North Road, South Molton, the Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons, the water is then distributed through the Town mains which are of varying diameters. The water is sampled and analysed at regular intervals.

I am pleased to again report that the filters and the water supply system generally continue to be maintained in a highly efficient manner by your Waterworks Foreman. Chlorination of the water is being carried out by the drip feed method at the Service Reservoirs and is proving to be satisfactory. A full supply of water has been maintained throughout the year.

RESULTS OF SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS.

A total of 6 samples of water have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and five of these were placed in Grade 1 and one in Grade 2. These results can be regarded as satisfactory.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF WATER.

Plate Count. Yeastrel agar 2 days 37° C. aerobically — per ml.
Probable number of coliform bacilli, MacConkey 2 days, 37° C. Nil per 100 ml.
" " " faecal coli ... — per 100 ml.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS.

ANALYTICAL EXAMINATION OF WATER.

Description of Sample—Sample of water from Holywell Reservoir.

CHARACTERS.

Colour—Very slight green tint. *Turbidity*—Clear. *Taste*—Natural. *Odour*—None. *Suspended Matters*—Trace of detritus of vegetation. Diatoms, infusorians and other surface organisms.

ANALYSIS.

(Parts per Hundred Thousand).

Chlorine present as Chlorides	...	...	...	...	14.0
Nitrogen present as Nitrites	...	...	...	...	0
Nitrogen present as Nitrates	...	...	...	...	1.54
Phosphates	...	...	...	...	Slight trace
Sulphates	...	...	...	...	—
Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	...	...	—
Total Hardness equivalent to Calcium Carbonate	...	...	...	...	31.0
Temporary Hardness (annulled by boiling)	...	...	...	...	2.0
Permanent Hardness (not altered by boiling)	...	...	...	...	29.0
Saline Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0040
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27 deg. C.	...	...	...	...	0.5
Oxygen absorbed immediately	...	...	...	...	0
Lead	...	...	...	...	0
Copper	...	...	...	...	0
Zinc	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in solution	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in sedimentary form	...	...	...	...	0
Manganese	...	...	...	...	0
Total Solid Constituents	...	...	...	...	80.0
Organic matter observed in igniting the Solid Constituents—					Slight trace
Hydrogen Ion Concentration equivalent to pH	...	...	...	...	6.2

The Analyst reports the sample discloses no evidence that the water contains any unusual Constituent or that it possesses any unwholesome quality but that the water is PLUMBO SOLVENT.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

MOLE BRIDGE SEWAGE WORKS.—The works are being maintained satisfactorily. Samples of the effluent are taken at frequent intervals by the Devon Rivers Board and the Analyst's report are very satisfactory.

The sewage outfalls at Cooks Cross and West End Terrace are being maintained as well as is possible to do having regard to the condition of the plant.

HOUSING.

12 Traditional Houses were erected and tenanted during the year. 10 Private Bungalows and Houses have been completed during the year.

128 Traditional Houses and Bungalows, and 16 Non-Traditional Houses have been erected since World War II.

PLANS.

30 Plans for new buildings and extensions have been dealt with under Planning and Byelaws during the year.

SANITATION.

Number of Houses inspected	...	...	...	9
Number of preliminary notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	5
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	2

CHIEF DEFECTS THAT HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH ARE :

Roof Repairs, and made watertight.

Lavatory Pans renewed.

Choked Drains.

Stoves and Cooking Appliances renewed.

General repairs to Walls, Floors and Ceilings.

Improvement of Domestic Water Supplies. A considerable number of New Services have been laid.

Few Public Health nuisances have occurred in the Borough during the year and those which have occurred have mostly been dealt with informally and remedied.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

Domestic Refuse is collected regularly in the built-up area of the Borough, and monthly collections are made from outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the dump at Hacche Road and the dump is regularly treated for the destruction of rodents.

BAKEHOUSES.

Bakehouses are inspected periodically. With the co-operation of owners any alterations or repairs are readily carried out.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and generally are found to be kept as required by the Factory Acts. Owners have from time to time been asked to make minor improvements and have readily done so.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough :—

Number on Register	...	...	...	12
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	14
Notices served	...	...	...	Nil

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the Borough :—

Number on Register	...	...	...	35
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	14
Notices served	...	...	...	Nil
Cases in which defects were found and remedied				4

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

There are two Private Slaughterhouses in the Borough and both are kept in good condition.

MEAT INSPECTION.

All meat from slaughterhouses in the Borough is inspected chiefly by Mr. Nex and on a few occasions by myself when he is not available.

Unsound food including meat is surrendered by Traders and a Certificate is given. The unsound food is marked with a green dye and is given to persons to boil for poultry and pig food. Meat found to be unsound is burned.

TINNED FOODS.

The following foods have been condemned :—

Tinned Foods	No. of Tins	Weight
Meat	—	156 lbs.
Milk	6	5 "
Fruit	3	1½ "

**CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED
IN WHOLE OR IN PART**

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	77	—	3	167	228	Nil
Number inspected	77	—	3	167	228	Nil
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci.						
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	16	—	—	2	1	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tubercu- losis and cysticerci	20.77 %	—	—	1.19 %	0.45 %	Nil
Tuberculosis only.						
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	4	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	1.29 %	—	—	—	1.75 %	Nil
Cysticercosis						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

TOTAL WEIGHT OF OFFAL AND MEAT CONDEMNED.

168 lbs. Offal. 57 lbs. Meat.

Number of visits made to Slaughterhouses & Butchers' Shops 179

INSPECTION OF FOOD PREMISES.

During the year a number of visits were made to Food Premises in the Borough, and the condition generally was found to be good. All premises requiring registration receive regular visits and all are maintained in good condition. Some improvements have been made by Traders at the request of the Department.

ICE CREAM.

Ice Cream is made at only one shop in the Borough from which samples are taken regularly.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PEST ACT.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken :—

The premises are carefully examined for rat runs, and clean meal pre-baits are laid down, which are left for a day or two, when poisoned baits are used, and the results are very satisfactory. The Refuse Tip at Hacche Road, the Sewage Outfalls at Mole Bridge, West End Terrace and Cooks Cross are periodically treated.

Very few complaints have been received of infestation on private premises during the year.

In conclusion I would like to thank Mr. Nex for the able assistance he has given me during the year, and in particular, for the care he has taken in regard to meat inspection.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HAROLD SETTLE,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

